

A Camera or a Fence?

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Standard 5

A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by acting with integrity, fairness, and in an ethical manner.

Knowledge

The administrator has knowledge and understanding of principles and issues of the various ethical frameworks and perspectives on ethics and the professional codes of ethics.

Dispositions

The administrator believes in, values, and is committed to accepting the consequences for upholding one's principles and actions and using the influence of one's office constructively and productively in the service of all students and their families.

The Scenario

This is your third year as principal of the K-5 elementary school that has a population of 450. Your largest grade levels are Kindergarten and First grade, indicating a growing number of young children in your building. The school is located on a busy highway. Before the increase in the kindergarten and grade one classes, the primary playground has been significantly away from the dangers of the highway. No fence has been built across the field on the highway side. Now, you have become increasingly aware of the potential safety hazard.

The high school has traditionally won the state championship in football for the division in which they play. It is a tremendous source of pride in the community that the football stadium, the press box, and equipment rival schools in the largest cities in your state. The identity of the community revolves around football.

At a school board meeting in March, the superintendent announced a surplus of \$5000 in the capital expenditures account. The high school athletic department has prepared a formal request that the amount be spent on a new, improved video camera and allied equipment, total cost of which is the full \$5000. This purchase would give the department a "much needed" fifth camera. This is the first you have heard of the surplus, but you quickly make an oral request that the money be spent on a fence which would separate the end of the space now needed for your primary playground from the highway.

Without discussion, the board voted to buy the camera.

Assignment

What actions would you take at this point to address your school's need for a fence?

Scoring Guide

For

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Student responses to the case study may be evaluated using the following scoring guide.

Score: 2

The response addresses two of the following criteria.

- The ethical principal of degree of care is primary, the younger the children involved
- The issue of safety is a higher issue than non-required program requests
- The principal is ready to accept the consequences for upholding one's principles and actions
- (The principal "draws a line in the sand" and may need to put the job on the line.)

Score: 1 -- The response addresses one of the above criteria.

Score: 0 -- None of the above criteria are addressed.